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Mid-East

17 May 1971

MEMORANDUM FOR: The Director

FROM : D/NE

SUBJECT : Military Estimates Procedures

Attached are drafts of two documents concerning procedures for the production of military estimates. One is a reply to General Bennett's memorandum to you of 6 April. (Also attached.) The other is a memorandum from you to D/NE which takes account of last year's experience and refines the guidelines for carrying on this work within the Agency. This latter paper is revised from the form in which Abbot discussed it with you earlier. The two papers are formulated in such a manner as to be entirely consistent with each other.

DDI and DDS&T are in accord with the two texts, and I think we now have a basis for getting this job done with a minimum of bureaucratic friction both internally and externally.

Since it is high time that we set these projects in motion, I hope you will agree to issue the two papers promptly.

Copies: DDI
DDS&T

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DRAFT Reply to General Bennett's Memorandum of 6 April 71

Dear Don:

I have studied carefully your memorandum to me of 6 April concerning production of NIE's on Soviet forces. It is obvious that changes in the scope and content of these papers made last year gave rise to problems which we must now sort out. In particular, the delays which caused inconvenience in Defense must not recur.

I take it to be established that estimates on these subjects must now contain extended statements of evidence and analysis supporting key judgments, and that differences of view must be fully explained, not merely asserted. The President's letter to me of 8 March warmly commended these innovations and must be taken as guidance for our future work.

Other users, as you indicate, may not need such a detailed presentation. For them, we should continue to provide extended conclusions and summary tables. Also, now that we have comprehensively covered the subject in the last round, it will be possible to transfer some material from the main text to annexes,

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and perhaps to omit some. In future, the main text should be constructed around the several key estimative issues, with purely descriptive or historical matter, so far as it is still needed, being removed to annexes.

I do not favor your suggestion for publishing a separate quarterly series on what you call "basic intelligence. . .that does not relate directly to key issues. . ." A distinction between what is "basic" and what is not seems to me artificial in the case of these estimates, especially since we are now required to provide large amounts of detail. Users have often told us, moreover, that they greatly value having all relevant information in a single document. In addition, I do not wish to see a further proliferation of publications which, apart from being undesirable in itself, would be wasteful of our production resources at a time when we are under injunction to use them more efficiently.

As to procedures, I consider it essential that responsibility for organizing and guiding our common effort in the production of NIE's remain centered in the Office of National Estimates. This system,

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which has proved itself over more than two decades, best insures that the resources and special competence of all participating agencies will be fully and fairly utilized.

Therefore, I intend that the Board of National Estimates remain responsible as before for preparing the Community's working drafts as well as for effecting their coordination. The Board will task participating agencies for inputs in the form of contributions, draft sections of text or annexes, and statements of potentially divergent positions. (Clearly, for these estimates "contributions" which are in effect whole drafts are unsuited and wasteful.) ONE will insure that the inputs of all agencies are used to achieve a coherent, integrated, and balanced working draft.

Particularly in view of your desire to see NIE's 11-3 and 11-8 appear even earlier this year, a matter I understand we will be discussing shortly when USIB takes up the estimative program, I consider the procedures outlined above essential to accomplish our common task.

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DRAFT

MEMORANDUM FOR DIRECTOR, NATIONAL ESTIMATES

SUBJECT: Production of Military Estimates

As we all know, NIE's 11-8-70 and 11-3-71 have been well received by consumers at the highest levels of the government, and I am glad that our military estimates now appear to be on the right track. No doubt they can be further improved as we become more accustomed to the new and extended format, and as we receive suggestions and recommendations from our readers.

Production of these estimates was inordinately delayed, owing in part to the much greater length and detail in which the material was set forth. But there appear also to have been problems arising out of the procedures, admittedly experimental, which I outlined to you last year for producing these papers. I want therefore to modify and clarify my earlier memorandum so as to insure that the estimates are produced more expeditiously.

The Board of National Estimates, and specifically the Board member designated as Chairman of the paper, remain responsible

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for the content and structure of the estimate as a whole. An Agency task force, headed by a senior substantive analyst from the DDI or DDS&T and with membership from the substantive offices of the DDI, DDS&T and the ONE Staff, will support the BNE Chairman and be directly responsible to him. Members of the task force will also be responsible for keeping the DDI and DDS&T informed of the progress of the estimate and any potentially significant problems.

The first stage in production of the estimate will be meetings among the BNE, the Agency task force, and Community representatives to discuss and agree on the main issues to be addressed, the scope of their treatment, and a working outline in as much detail as may be feasible. The BNE Chairman will then task the various participants for inputs - in the form of contributions, draft sections of text or annexes, statements of potentially divergent positions - with a view to insuring that the special competence of each is fully utilized.

Working in close consultation with the Board Chairman, the head of the task force will direct the preparation of an initial draft.

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Inputs from the participating USIB agencies and committees should be used, when feasible, as the basis for sections of this draft; it should also incorporate divergent views on major issues. The initial draft will be reviewed and revised by BNE to insure that a coherent, integrated and balanced working draft is sent to USIB agencies for coordination in the customary manner.

Obviously we must produce these estimates on the schedule to which we commit ourselves and on which consumers rely. I wish therefore that all concerned should give to their preparation the highest priority, subject only to clearly overriding demands of work on other projects of great urgency.

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